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HOLY TRANSFIGURATION

In the Orthodox Church, we have twelve main Holy Days. One of these is the Transfiguration of Our Lord, which may be found August 6/19 on the Church calendar.

Some of our people call this Holy Day Spasa, and it was observed with great ceremony.

This is a Scriptural Holy Day. It is beautifully and fully described in Luke 9:28-36 and Matthew 17:1-9. In order to strengthen the faith of His disciples, who would soon see His suffering, Jesus took three of His disciples, Peter, James and John, up to a high mountain to pray. As He prayed, the disciples slept from fatigue. When they awoke they were astonished to see Jesus Christ transfigured before them. His face shown like the sun and His garments glittered as with rays of fire. They were further amazed to find two people Moses and Elijah, who had been long dead, talking with Jesus. In the Vesper Service we are told why these two prophets were the only ones present. They were there as witnesses to His divinity. He was the fulfillment of the Law, which Moses represented, and of the Prophets, which Elijah represented.

The bright radiance and shining of the face is characteristic of those closest to God. Such was the case of Moses, which is written about in Exodus 34:29-35, and it brings to mind St. Seraphim of Sarov, whose face was seen to shine like the brightest sun.

On this day, which is considered to be the last of the summer harvest, there is what is called an "ingathering" in this country. Fruits, vegetables, and grain and honey are brought to the church for blessing. These offerings of gratitude for the bounty were then distributed among the less fortunate members of the community, with some being set aside for the family. It is interesting that in this country, fruit for blessing is either purchased by the parish or only some members bring their gift of gratitude. They usually share it with those who did not bring any.

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When all your efforts seem in vain,
You struggle hard but see no gain,
Do one thing without delay –
Pause a moment, just to pray.

DISAPPEARING VILLAGES

The villages are disappearing in Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine, and southern Poland, the areas we visit in the Carpathians.

For example, in 1960 there were 73,000 villages in Russia each with less than 750 residents. The State Statistical Commission stated that in 1994 there were about 23,000. This means that over two-thirds of the villages were gone in thirty years. They continue to disappear at a greater rate. A third of these have emptied the last five years.

In past years, 60% of the inhabitants were under thirty-five years of age. So many have left that there are now only about 10% of the populace which is under thirty-five. Over 80% of those villagers remaining are over sixty years old. Most of these are widows.

Sometimes the villages are referred to as "glorified potato and cabbage patches with chickens, ducks, a pig and a goat here and there." Very few of the homes have running water and indoor bathroom facilities are even more rare.

There doesn't seem to be any village government. Streets are in awful shape as are other village services. The inhabitants say they are ashamed of the condition of their village. It takes only a short stroll along the dirt streets which are lined with individual fences to notice open ditches running between the street and walkways. These carry sewage from houses that have inside facilities or running water. We visited some relatives in one of the larger villages which still exists. Some years ago the road was dug up to put in gas lines. The ditches were still not filled in three years later. The deep ruts would break the axle on any modern American auto.

Alcoholism is far too prevelant. Vodka is cheap and wine is made in every house-

(Continued on Page 21, Col. 3)

NO RELICS

"We seek refuge under the protection of your mercies, O Mother of God; do not reject our supplication in need but save us, O you who alone are blessed."

Such a prayer sums up the feelings of millions devoted to Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ. In their eyes she is a kindly mother figure who can intercede for them with God and her Son and in some way temper His judgments toward them.

Mary was without doubt "highly favored" – more favored, in fact, than any other woman who has ever lived. (Luke 1:28) The angel Gabriel appeared to her and explained just how privileged she would be. "Rejoice!" he said. "You will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest."

How was this miraculous event possible?

Gabriel continued: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:31,32,35).

Mary humbly acceded to this divine direction and in time gave birth to Jesus. Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."

Yes, Mary was greatly blessed as the mother of the One who became the Christ, and finally in 431 A.D., she was officially given the title "Theotokos" by the 3rd Ecumenical Council which was meeting in Ephesus. This Council decreed that Mary should be honored by this name which confirms Orthodox belief in the incarnation: that Christ was both true God and true man.

Her life on this earth was special and so was her leaving it. On August 15/28 we commemorate her Falling Asleep. This day is also sometimes called the Dormition, which means passage through

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CHRONOLOGY

AUGUST 1996

DIED – Archimandrite Thomas (Green) in Monastery Of Ascension, Resaca, GA.

GENEALOGY services are asked to send information to the Rusin Assoc., 115 Pineview Lane No., Minneapolis, MN 55441 or call 612-595-9188. Those who want help tracing their relatives may get information at the same address.

MONASTERIES are the key to Russians producing food. At the present time thousands of tons of emergency food shipments are pouring into Russia. To provide long-term food needs, church officials hope to "reinstitute" the monasteries as centers of agriculture, combining religious and agricultural functions in much the same way they operated for centuries. Prior to the revolution, there were more than 5,000 monasteries which dwindled to less than 12. The number is being increased as they are being returned to the church.

CASSETTES on the Orthodox Church may be purchased or borrowed from Orthodox Christian Cassettes, Inc., 2919 No. 56th St., Springdale, AK 72762 or phone (501) 927-3808. Ask for catalogue and particulars.

THERE ARE NOW 450 VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE IN ENGLISH. The sole purpose of some of these versions is to relate to athletes, the elderly, stay-at-home mothers, fathers, African-Americans (using slang and drama to liven up Biblical narratives), a gender-neutral one (God is called the Father-Mother, and Christ becomes "the human one.") and even a version for those who read at a 2.9 grade level.

A RETREAT HOUSE for wives of Orthodox clergy is planned for South Carolina. Contact Lyn Breck, Orthodox Chancery, PO Box 191109, Dallas, TX 75219.

HOME SCHOOLING for Orthodox children is gaining popularity with parents who are concerned that true Christian morality and truth and values are no longer a part of the public schools' curriculi. Contact Catherine Sullivan at RD 2, Box 187, Otego, NY 13825.

CHERNOBYL accident happened 10 years ago. Children are suffering from thyroid cancer. Much help is needed. The OCA has issued an appeal. Donations can be sent directly to "Chernobyl Fund" OCA Chancery, Box 675, Syosset, NY 11791. The Moscow Patriarchate also has a charitable fund. Five famous choirs have produced a CD of liturgical music entitled: Russian Choirs Sing For The Children of Chernobyl. This is obtainable from your record store from Schwann label, catalogue no. 3-1332-2. The cover is striking-depicting an icon, the damaged nuclear plant and Jesus comforting maimed children.

INFORMATION IN THE BIBLE has helped geologists and archaeologists in their work. They have found lost cities and even oil wells in Egypt. Someone found reference to pitch in the Book of Exodus and put two and two together.

INTERESTED IN THE HISTORY OF RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH MUSIC. Order Choral Performance in Pre-Revolutionary Russia by V. Morosan, Ph.D. Send $39 to Musica Russica, 27 Willow Lane, Madison, CT 06443.

REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PRISON MINISTRY visited Eastern Europe. They met with Bishop Sava, who had been appointed to care for the prison and military religious needs. He said he would adapt materials from the Ministry, translate them into Russian and print them for use.

DIFFERENCES ARE EXPANDING between several groups on what the people who live around the Carpathian Mountains should be called. They had originally come from Russia and so were called Carpatho-Ros or Carpathian-Russians or Malo-Ros for centuries. After they came under the jurisdiction of Roman Catholic leaders like the Austro-Hungarian Empire, they got the name Ruthenians. The past forty years they are increasingly called Rusyns, especially in this country. The differences came to the fore when the Sen. John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center opened and featured among other displays one called "Carpatho-Rusyn."

THE GREAT COLLECTION OF THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS was compiled by St. Demetrius of Rostov, who lived between 1651 and 1709. These twelve volumes are being translated into English. Two volumes are now ready and available from Chrysostom Press, PO Box 536, House Springs, MO 63051.

THE LIBRARY of the Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute at the Graduate Theological Union, 2309 Hearst Ave., Berkeley, CA 94709 contains a unique collection of Orthodox material including 10,000 volumes. It is the largest Orthodox library on the West Coast.

MARRIED PRIESTS are a possibility. Bishop Cornelius Pasichny of the Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, Canada is willing to consider ordaining married men to the priesthood. His predecessor, Bishop Basil Filevich ordained a married man last year. This was the first time in over 60 years that a married man was ordained in North America. Bishop Cornelius said he had no negative feedback on this ordination either from the Vatican or the people. The Vatican prohibited the ordination of married men in North America in 1929. However, it does allow this (married Uniate priest) in Europe: Ukraine, Slovakia, and Poland.

INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS for both written and spoken work are needed at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, TX write to Defense Group, Inc., 111 So. Bedford St., Burlington, MA 01803, Attn: Andy Klimoff. There is a perennial need for interpreters/translators at the US State Dept. For info call: Dimitri Zarechnak at 202-647-3492 or Peter Afanasenko at 202-647-4243.

•Holy Transfiguration

In Jerusalem and Greece, grapes were taken to the church. In Russia, where grapes were not yet ripe, apples were brought. In the Carpathian area, the variety was greater as mentioned earlier. Where wheat was grown, sheaves of wheat were included and in some areas special harvest wreaths were braided from the leavings in the wheat fields. They were taken for blessing and then hung around or near an ikon.

The bringing of the bounty of harvest was mentioned as far back as in The Ecclesiastical Rules of the Holy Apostles, which was composed earlier than the year 300 AD, to govern the church.

There are two specific prayers used in the blessing. One is for grapes and the other for the other gifts.

When I was young I had some older relatives who did not eat any fruit ripening in the year until they were blessed on this day. I always felt sorry for them because I like sweet cherries, and I felt that they were missing a lot by not eating them. I have since read that this tradition was kept by many.

•No Relics

death and Assumption which means Ascension into heaven. At the beginning of Christianity, the whole Christian world used the name "Falling Asleep of the Mother of God." Gradually in the West it was called the Assumption and in 1950, Rome declared the dogma of the Assumption. Perhaps, there are ikons that differ, but the only ones we have seen depict the Mother of God lying on her bier. (Her "Falling Asley") The Apostles surround her, and Christ is portrayed hovering near her holding a small figure of her.

There are no relics of the Mother of God. Their existence has never been mentioned. St. John Damascus gave several sermons on this (749). He tells how the East Roman Emperor Marcian (457 A.D.) and his wife Pulcheria, asked the Bishop of Jerusalem at the Council of Chalcedon in the year 451 A.D., to have the relics of the Mother of God brought to Constantinople. The Bishop is said to have answered: "Mary died in the presence of the Apostles, but her tomb, when opened later on the request of St. Thomas, was found empty, and thus the Apostles concluded that the body was taken up to Heaven."

In another sermon, he clearly expresses the same belief: "Your sacred and happy soul, as nature will have it, was separated in death from your most blessed and pure body; and although the body was duly interred, it did not remain in the state of death, neither was it dissolved by decay... Your most pure and sinless body was not left on earth but you were transferred to your heavenly throne, O Lady, Queen, and Mother of God in truth."

Although there are no relics of the Mother of God, her belt and veil were kept in the Blachernae Church in Constantinople. This was the goal of many pilgrimages. It is interesting that this is the same church where the events that we commemorate on the Protection on Oct. 1/14.

To mark the great significance of this day and in order to glorify her Falling Asleep, this Holy Day is preceded by a two-week period of fasting. This begins on August 1/15. Many cannot understand why the Church has prescribed a fasting period. In The Orthodox Way Bishop Kassistos has explained it well. He says that fasting liberates our body from the burden of excesses and makes it a willing partner in the task of prayer and more alert and responsive to the voice of the Spirit. Furthermore, he adds, that a person is a unity of body and soul, and for the Orthodox, bodily fasting has great spiritual value.

The Dormition is fully discussed in The Life of the Virgin, Mary, the Theotokos, which can be ordered from Holy Apostles Convent, PO Box 3118, Buena Vista, CO 81211.

PRESS FUND

A great Spasebo to all who have us in their prayers and concern. John Donne said the "no man is an island unto himself." We certainly could not keep publishing without you. Mary Ann Carmack, Dorothy Demianovich, Travis McClendon, Shirley Sass, Orthodox Society of America, Irene Allen, Helen Dzugan, Peter and Dorothy Petronka, Olga Kasper, Michael Tisma, N. Komernicky, Faith Pommier, Margaret Pysarchyk, Irene Weimacher, Mary Bankovsky, Helen Cudlic, Steve and Irene Pacak, Mary Gillow, Vera Kolos, Leona Hutchko, Mr. and Mrs. James F. Wagner, Dr. Dimitrios Pappas, Andrew and Faye Fick, John Nazarenko, Madeline Pisani, Mary Kochmaruk. Joseph and Mary Evanchicl, Andrew Popovchak. Steve and Lenora Evancho for health of sister Claudia Sulin and Fr. and Matushka Stroyen.

* * * * * * * * * *

"Stay at home" parents seldom have "go to church" children.

•Disappearing Villages

hold. The vineyards are plentiful and several barrels (botchkas) are made of different types of wine.

The average village houses are almost the same. They are small and usually have the kitchen in an adjoining building. Much as we have summer kitchens in some areas of our country.

The villages have a hard time keeping teachers because they pay so poorly or not at all or late. The tax base is weak since unemployment is high and there are few children remaining in the villages. Most of those remaining are in babas care.

If you have a relative in a Carpathian area village, help them. Ten or twenty dollars will easily carry them through a month.

THE POWER OF THE BIBLE

The Bible is far from being just a collection of old fables and sayings that are out-of-date and irrelevant. It contains principles and ideas from mankind's Creator, Who, from His supreme vantage point, knows human nature better than anyone else. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:9.

For this reason the apostle Paul testifies that "the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Yes, God's Word has the power to reach in and touch a person's heart and change his thinking and behavior.



St. Nicholas Orthodox Monastery located on "Black Mt." (Chorna Hora) near Mukachevo in the Ukraine. It was founded in the 14th century.

ETHNIC CHUCKLE

Dorohayah Tyotya Mareeyah,

Yak tam kolo vas. Tooth shitko OK. Allee yah mala takee experience!

Nasha parafeeah mala hoditchnee picnic pered petropavelskoho posta. Bull barz shumneeh day ee me decided to go. Me came to picnic grounds ee kupeelee teekehtea. Many people were there. Yah veedeelah mnoho friendsee, krayahnee, rodeenah, kumee ee kumovee, svatee ee svatovee.

Me then became takee hungry eeh poshlee kupetee shoska eestee. Prodavalee hot dogsee, perohee, hamburgee, ee kobasoo with kapusta ee skwarkee. EE they having tam barooh dlya hlopsee deh selling peevo ee soduy.

Me dobroh yelee ee malee troshka peetee. The orchestra began to hratee. Bull takee excitement. Yah hotcheelah tansovatee, no me husband don't want to do anything but stoyatee kolo bareeh peetee peevo ee talking. Yah poking him ee poking him noh ohn don't pay any attention to me. Yah dostala take mad nah yeho zhe yah kazhu yehmu zhe yak ohn neh hotchee tansovatee toh yah poyduy sama.

Yah peeshla kol dance floor ee nashla kumu ee me dancing one after another. Yah mala takee good time zhe yah zabulah za me staroho husbanda. Orchestra hralee polkas ee chardashe ee shitkee nashee krayovee tansee. Yah dance every one.

Kolee orchestra bral break yah realized zhe yah looked ee smelled bad. Bullo tephlo, me deoderant gave out, me hairdo pallo, ee me slip strap broke. Yah take sweatee zhe yah decided to go, yak me next door neighbor says, to freshen up.

Yah bulla few feet ot dance floor kolee yah heard a man's voice say: "Pardon me, are you Hanya." Yah turned around ee almost passed out. Tam stoyeet mee staree fryear. Ohn looking takee handsome, takee clean ee collected ah yah feeling ee looking yak stara reksaw. Ee yah stinkee besides. Yah nez nah what yah gotta do.

Noh yah dumam kinda fast, ee yah say to him zhe yah neh Hanya, noh Hanya me poveela just a couple of minutes ago zhe ohna going to do some shopping and preede back in one hour.

Yah peshlah home tak fast, got cleaned up, brala me dobree perfume ot kufreekah, nadeelah novee dress, got dolled up ee peeshla back nah peeknek. Yah taka nervous, me heart tak pounding, yah getting all sweatee again. Yah dumam ee dumam what yah going to say ee yak yah going to act kolee me staree fryear preedey kolo menah.

Yah finally got to dance floor ah tam stoyeet me husband ee kazhee me: "Anna, I could have swaore that you had another dress on when we came to the picnic."

Yah nech yehmu neh kazhu noh yah looking zah fryearah. And there he is, noh ohn meneh yestyeh neh veedit.

Mala takee good time.
Budtey zdrovee
Hanya.

THE WINE

On Transfiguration Day in countries where grapes are grown for making wine, the grapes are brought to the church for blessing. In some villages there are grapes growing in every yard and every cellar has a few barrels of wine.

In one village, each family, after the gathering of grapes, took one-tenth of their wine and poured it into a large vat which was near the church. This wine would then be used for the sacrament and certain communal celebrations.

One year, the harvest was smaller than expected. One of the farmer villagers decided to keep all of his wine. When the time came for him to pour his share into the vat, he poured in water instead. He justified his action and cleared his conscience by thinking that with the many offerings from the other villagers, a little water would make little difference. He promised himself, that next year he would give a bit more wine than required.

Years later, the priest and all the villagers gathered for the first tasting from the vat. The mayor opened the spigot to begin the celebration. As he did so, clear water poured into his glass. It seems that all the villagers had thought that their offering of water would make little difference. Each kept his own wine. There was no wine in the common vat either for the village celebrations, but more importantly for the sacrament.

* * * * * * * * * * *

When Macbeth had his ambition stirred by the three witches and saw his opportunity to become king by assassinating his faithful lord, he drew back from the dreadful crime. His more hardened wife read his letter hinting at his emotions and mused of him: "Thou wouldst be great; Art not without ambition, but without the illness should attend it."

What is the illness which should attend worldly ambition? It is a willingness and readiness to lower one's principle, silence one's conscience, and so bow down to Satan for the sake of securing some worldly aim.

Dabs of Thoughts

The problems faced by the church today are the same as they were faced by the Corinthian Church – the breakdown of public and private morals, the destruction of the family, the prevalence of divorce, the blatancy of personal sexual immorality. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians that Christ is the only solution.

Prior to Confession, our examination of conscience must not be reduced to a cold introspection, but rather must consist in putting ourselves face to face with God, to look at ourselves in Him, to see ourselves in the light of His truth and infinite goodness, of His eternal love, of His grace and countless gifts. Then even our slightest flaws stand out in clearer light, and we feel more strongly urged to repentance and conversion, and at the same time are led to trust more in God than in self.

Now we hear of spiritual abuse. This is said to happen when authority figures use spiritual means to gratify their desires for importance, power or intimacy.

Precisely because the Father is love, He will everlastingly bestow the gifts that sustain us in being whether we use them rightly or wrongly. The sun will rise on us whether we use the day for good or ill; the rain will come to our parched souls whether we love less warm or tender; we may turn away, but God's love, like the sun and rain, will not.

We cannot decide whether or not we will live or die; we can only decide what we will die for.

Most people live their lives by an eight-day week. They have Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Someday. Many people plan to do good Someday. The fact is that Someday is not a day in the week, and Someday never comes.

Isn't it awkward to say that someone writes ikons?

Even secular commentators have noted religion's failure to convince, to inculcate true values, and to resist the inroads of secularism. In his book <u>Out of Control</u> Zbigniew Brzezinski wrote: "It is a striking paradox that the greatest victory for the proposition that 'God is dead' has occurred not in the Marxist-dominated states … but in Western liberal democratic societies, which have culturally nurtured moral apathy. In the later, the fact is that religion has ceased to be a major social force."



EDITORS' NOTES

Next month is September and the beginning of classes for Sunday School, religious education and Bible classes. Many people order a packet of The Orthodox Herald to be distributed to the members of these classes. There are always articles in each issue that relate to Holy Days, etc. in the month. Many teachers use them to prepare a class using the article as is or adding a bit to it. Why not be a benefactor? The price is minimal and the benefits are great. Write to us for information now so that we can set aside September issues for you.

In this time of history, we have developed a ravenous craving for entertainment. In fact, a great part of every dollar made today is spent directly or indirectly to satisfy this consuming appetite. There are ever-increasing dangers that are confronting the church because the members are bringing these appetites into their understanding of the church and its services.

Worship is not entertainment. To worship God is one of the main reasons for the Divine Liturgy. It is different from going to a play, rock concert or show to be entertained. Worship is an interaction that takes place between the worshipper and God. This comes from the heart and soul of the participant.

We have, because of our craze for entertainment, started viewing worship as something done for our benefit, instead of something we engage in because of our love and devotion to God, our Creator. This, of course, accounts for the lack of steadfastness in the attendance to services, because we have not placed priority on worship, as true worship. If we examine our hearts, and find that it is only entertainment for us, then it can be done or left off as we have the desire. Even for those who attend, the lack of attention and their seeming indifference, show unquestionably that we have got to be entertained instead of this being a meaningful meeting between us and our Creator.

As long as we attend church with this mental frame of mind instead of being dependent worshippers that are blessed with an opportunity to praise and adore the God of the universe, the Lord of life, the services will be dull, uninteresting and too long, and innovations such as shortening them as one pleases and adding other innovations bordering on sensationalism will be needed to pump some life into this boring "liturgy." When we, on the other hand, come reverently to learn the prescribed acts that the Father allows as worship and then enter them with our whole being, then life and power will again be present within us and also the church.

On the beginning of this month, we should be enjoying our 1996 Heritage Tour, circling the Carpathian Mountains. Besides the ethnic, cultural activities and sightseeing we look forward to renewing the dedication of the new church in Krynica at his invitation, and being guests at the Divine Liturgy at the church in the village of Novo Davidkovo, and visiting with the nuns at the St. Nicholas Monastery in Mukachevo. This monastery is very important in the history of both the Orthodox and Eastern Catholic Church. The sisters always treat us with great love and are waiting to see us again.

God Be With You All. We'll share our experiences with you when we return.

Fr. & Matushka Stroyen

WINTER GRACE

Dear God, we thank Thee today for the blessed assurance that Jesus came that we might have life abundant, here and now.

We also thank Thee that the messages He left many years ago, are true today – "I go to prepare a place for you... And "because I live ye too shall live."

Forgive us any doubts that might creep in, Father, just because there are times when we feel lonely for dear ones gone on ahead. Help us to keep our hearts clean and ready at all times to face that glorious moment when we can say, "I am with Thee."

Amen.

CHUCKLE

Youth looks for greener pastures: middle age is when we can hardly mow the one we've got.

ALASKA FUND

Helping this month are Olga Kasper, Faith Pommier, Anon.

•Kitchen Corner

to boiling point. Pour over slaw; refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight. Keeps for 1 week or more, prepared in a covered bowl and tossed occasionally. Great for picnics; travels well.

I BELIEVE

The word Creed comes from the Latin word credo, which means "I believe." From the earliest days of the Church, creeds have been living confessions of what Christians believe; they are not simply formal, academic, Church pronouncements. Such confessions of faith appear almost at the very beginning of Christianity. We can read in the New Testament where in 1 Timothy 3:16, St. Paul quotes from an ancient creed to remind Timothy about the divinity of Jesus Christ: "God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory."

The creeds were discussed and approved by the Church Councils, to give a concise statement of the truth in the face of various heresies filtering into the Church.

For Orthodox, the most important creed is the Nicean Creek. It is the product of the first two Ecumenical Councils, which were convened in Nicea in 325 and in Constantinople in 381.

It was composed and ratified in the midst of a life-and-death controversy. It contains the essence of New Testament teaching about the Holy Trinity, guarding that life-giving truth against those who would change the very nature of God and reduce Jesus to a created being rather than acceptance that He is God in the flesh.

The creeds are important because they give us a sure interpretation of the Scriptures helping us to keep the true belief against those who would distort them to support their own religious schemes. Called the "Symbol of Faith" and confessed in many services of the Church, the Nicean Creed reminds us of what we personally believe and it keeps our faith on track.

* * * * * * * * * *

Most of us wait until we are in trouble, then we pray. Wonder what would happen if some morning we would wake and say: "Anything I can do for you today, Lord?"



When we plan a picnic or barbecue, we take enough equipment and food to last a week. This brings to mind the picnics our family had when we were children. The selection of food was restricted but such flair was used to make the fire and cook it, I'm sure that it added to the taste. We collected the branches, a fire was started. Then our father cut some green branches to thread the salo (salt pork). Who can forget the smell as the fat dripped onto the coals. And when everything was eaten, the potatoes were put into the hot ashes. I have never tasted a potato better than one blackened and baked in these ashes. Some times we were in such a hurry that we ate the potatoes half raw. Our blackened hands and mouths didn't get cleaned until we got back home.

Since most food was kept cool in the cellar, we seldom had food made with mayonnaise. This overnight slaw was usually taken to the picnic because it doesn't spoil that readily.

CELLAR SLAW

1 medium cabbage, shredded
2 medium onions, thinly sliced
3/4 cup plus 2 tbsp. sugar
3/4-1 cup vinegar
3/4-1 cup salad oil
1 tsp. dry mustard
1 tsp. celery seed or 1 cup celery, chopped
1 tsp. sugar
1 1/2-3 tsp. salt

Alternate layers of cabbage and onions in salad bowl. Sprinkle with 7/8 cup sugar. Combine vinegar, oil, dry mustard, celery seed or celery, 1 tsp. sugar, and salt. Heat

(Continued on Page 23, Col. 3)

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AUGUST 1996

1 Matt 20:17-28	16 Matt 24:27-33
2 Matt 21:12-14	17 Matt 19:3-12
3 Matt 15:32-39	18 Matt 18:23-35
4 Matt 14:22-34	19 Mark 1:9-15
5 Matt 21:18-22	20 Mark 1:16-22
6 Matt 17:1-9	21 Mark 1:23-28
7 Matt 21:28-32	22 Mark 1:29-35
8 Matt 21:43-46	23 Mark 2:18-22
9 Matt 22:23-33	24 Matt 20:29-34
10 Matt 17:24-18:4	25 Matt 19:16-26
11 Matt 17:14-23	26 Mark 3:6-12
12 Matt 12:13-22	27 Mark 3:13-19
13 Matt 5:14-19	28 Mark 3:20-27
14 Matt 23:29-39	29 Mark 3:28-35
15 Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28	30 Mark 4:1-9
	31 Matt 22:15-22

BIBLE STUDY

There are those who are avowedly bad and desire no change; there are those who try to be good but slip, fail, and plunge into discouragement.

Some time ago when the submarine S-4 sank off Massachusetts with the entire crew on board, a deep sea diver hours later heard someone inside the hull tapping out in Morse code, "I-s t-h-e-r-e a-n-y h-o-p-e?"

This is the cry today of a multitude of people who feel trapped in the frustrating situation of desiring to be good, but being unable to do so.

There are two dead-end roads that will never lead your soul to a good spiritual life, both of these are widely recommended today in certain counseling circles. The first is the suggestion to let yourself go. We are told not to repress our native instincts, for this stewing will lead to high blood pressure and ulcers among other ills. Does blowing our top and blaming it on our bad temper really help us deal with our problems? Does drinking intemperately or dealing shadily in business or living an immoral sex life really help our mental and spiritual life? These things only lead to mounting frustrations and increasing problems.

The other blind alley is the advice given to raise our self-esteem. We are told that we are number one and soon we feel the world revolves around us. This leads to a person who doesn't have a concept of considering another person's feelings or rights. This person manipulated people to attain his end. Religious talk about humility and repentance go over his head because "number one" has become so self-important that God has no place in his life.

There is an answer and it is available to those who are trying to lead a better life. Come with me to the Sea of Galilee. Listen to Jesus telling his disciples, "Get into the boat and go to the other side of the lake, to Bethsaida." Then night approaches, a storm blows over the hills, and we read in Matthew 14:22-34, "They were distressed in rowing for the wind was against them." Suddenly in the midst of their distress and fear they look up and see Jesus walking on the very sea of their trouble. He is coming to them in their hour of need. Now note what Jesus did. Did He call out to them, "Heave ho, there, boys! Stretch every nerve!"? Or did He call out to them, "Let go and drift?" Have you had experience enough with a boat to know what happens if you "let go" in a strong wind? It is essential that the bow be kept into the oncoming waves or the next big one will find you and sidewise the boat, which will upset the craft and sink it.

Further we read, "Jesus got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased!" Note this carefully, for it does not say that He seized an oar and together they outfought the wind. It clearly states that when He entered the boat, the wind ceased, the fight was over. Engrave this on your mind. Here is the answer you have been seeking. If you will stop thinking about your problem and yourself and start thinking about Jesus Christ, about God, His Father and yours, and will begin to say, "I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me," you will be amazed to find the problem becoming easily manageable. The wind will cease.

But how do you get Jesus into your boat? You must unload in genuine repentance any sins of your life uncongenial to His presence. And, finally, "He made as if He would pass them by" and waited until they called to Him and invited Him in. You must issue and persist in this invitation. If you do, you will "overcome evil with good" and be able to face life with less fret, strain or failure. Try it and see.

MISSION FUND

Some of the copies are sent to those in prison. This month we received letters from two prisoners who would like to correspond with someone. If interested, write for their addresses. Helping this month to send copies to mission areas are John Peregrim, Olga Kasper, Helen Kolanage, Faith Pommier. G P Sebastian in memory of Marie Yakovleva.